

In the Claims:

1. (Original) A hand-held apparatus for installing a cover around an article, wherein the cover comprises an elongated flexible panel having generally parallel opposite first and second edge portions that are configured to be joined together to enclose the article, the apparatus comprising:
 - a frame having opposite first and second sides, and opposite first and second ends;
 - a guide assembly secured to the frame first side, comprising:
 - an elongated bottom wall having opposite third and fourth ends, and opposite first and second edge portions;
 - a first set of spaced-apart rollers rotationally mounted to the frame first side adjacent the elongated bottom wall first edge portion, wherein each of the rollers in the first set rotates about an axis that is transverse to the frame first side;
 - a second set of spaced-apart rollers rotationally mounted to the frame first side adjacent the elongated bottom wall second edge portion, wherein each of the rollers in the second set rotates about an axis that is transverse to the frame first side;
 - wherein the first and second set of rollers converge towards the frame first end to define a guide assembly outlet and wherein the first and second set of rollers diverge towards the frame second end to define a guide assembly inlet; and
 - a partition, comprising:
 - a base member that extends upwardly from the bottom wall between the bottom wall first and second edge portions;
 - an elongated top wall transversely connected to the base member in spaced-apart relationship with the bottom wall, wherein the top wall comprises opposite upper and lower surfaces and opposite elongated edges, wherein each elongated edge is maintained in spaced apart relationship with a respective one of the sets of rollers to permit passage therebetween of a portion of the flexible panel adjacent a

respective edge portion of the flexible panel, wherein a first portion of the top wall lower surface and a first portion of the bottom wall define a first elongated passageway configured to slidably receive the flexible panel first edge portion therethrough, and wherein a second portion of the top wall lower surface adjacent the top wall lower surface first portion and a second portion of the bottom wall adjacent the bottom wall first portion define a second elongated passageway configured to slidably receive the flexible panel second edge portion therethrough;

wherein the elongated guide assembly is configured to join together the first and second edge portions of the flexible panel as the flexible panel is advanced through the guide assembly from the guide assembly inlet to the guide assembly outlet.

2. (Original) The hand-held apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein the first portion of the bottom wall that defines the first elongated passageway comprises an elongated channel formed therein.

3. (Original) The hand-held apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein the frame comprises a flat, rigid plate.

4. (Original) The hand-held apparatus according to Claim 1 further comprising a handle extending from the frame second side.

5. (Original) The hand-held apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein the article is an electrical conductor.

6. (Original) The hand-held apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein the cover further comprises a wall having a free end extending from the flexible panel first surface adjacent the first edge portion, and wherein the top wall upper surface is configured to slidably receive the flexible cover wall thereon as the flexible panel is advanced through the guide assembly.

7. (Original) A hand-held apparatus for installing a cover around an article, wherein the cover comprises an elongated flexible panel having generally parallel opposite first and second edge portions that are configured to be joined together to enclose the article, the apparatus comprising:

- a frame having opposite first and second sides, and opposite first and second ends;

- a guide assembly secured to the frame first side, comprising:

- an elongated bottom wall having opposite third and fourth ends, and opposite first and second edge portions;

- a first set of spaced-apart rollers rotationally mounted to the frame first side adjacent the elongated bottom wall first edge portion, wherein each of the rollers in the first set rotates about an axis that is transverse to the frame first side;

- a second set of spaced-apart rollers rotationally mounted to the frame first side adjacent the elongated bottom wall second edge portion, wherein each of the rollers in the second set rotates about an axis that is transverse to the frame first side;

- wherein the first and second set of rollers converge towards the frame first end to define a guide assembly outlet and wherein the first and second set of rollers diverge towards the frame second end to define a guide assembly inlet; and

- a partition, comprising:

- a base member that extends upwardly from the bottom wall between the bottom wall first and second edge portions;

- an elongated top wall transversely connected to the base member in spaced-apart relationship with the bottom wall, wherein the top wall comprises opposite upper and lower surfaces and opposite elongated edges, wherein each elongated edge is maintained in spaced apart relationship with a respective one of the sets of rollers to permit passage therebetween of a portion of the flexible panel adjacent a respective edge portion of the flexible panel, wherein the first set of

spaced-apart rollers and the partition define a first elongated passageway configured to slidably receive the flexible panel first edge portion therethrough, and wherein the second set of spaced-apart rollers and the partition define a second elongated passageway configured to slidably receive the flexible panel second edge portion therethrough;

wherein the elongated guide assembly is configured to join together the first and second edge portions of the flexible panel as the flexible panel is advanced through the guide assembly from the guide assembly inlet to the guide assembly outlet.

8. (Original) The hand-held apparatus according to Claim 7 wherein the frame comprises a flat, rigid plate.

9. (Original) The hand-held apparatus according to Claim 7 further comprising a handle extending from the frame second side.

10. (Original) The hand-held apparatus according to Claim 7 wherein the article is an electrical conductor.

11. (Original) The hand-held apparatus according to Claim 7 wherein the cover further comprises a wall having a free end extending from the flexible panel first surface adjacent the first edge portion, and wherein the top wall upper surface is configured to slidably receive the flexible cover wall thereon as the flexible panel is advanced through the guide assembly.

12. (Withdrawn) A hand-held apparatus for installing a cover around an article, wherein the cover comprises an elongated flexible panel having generally parallel opposite first and second edge portions that are configured to be joined together to enclose the article, the apparatus comprising:

an elongated bottom wall having opposite first and second ends;

a pair of spaced-apart, elongated side walls that extend upwardly from the bottom wall, wherein the elongated side walls converge towards the elongated bottom wall first end to define an outlet, wherein the elongated side walls diverge towards the elongated bottom wall second end to define an inlet, and wherein the elongated walls have respective opposite facing undulating surfaces; and

a partition, comprising:

a base member that extends upwardly from the bottom wall between the elongated side walls; and

an elongated top wall transversely connected to the base member in spaced-apart relationship with the bottom wall, wherein the top wall comprises opposite upper and lower surfaces and opposite elongated edges, wherein each elongated edge is maintained in spaced apart relationship with a respective one of the side wall undulating surfaces to permit passage therebetween of a portion of the flexible panel adjacent a respective edge portion of the flexible panel, wherein a first portion of the top wall lower surface and a first portion of the bottom wall define a first elongated passageway configured to slidably receive the flexible panel first edge portion therethrough, and wherein a second portion of the top wall lower surface adjacent the top wall lower surface first portion and a second portion of the bottom wall adjacent the bottom wall first portion define a second elongated passageway configured to slidably receive the flexible panel second edge portion therethrough;

wherein the apparatus is configured to join together the first and second edge portions of the flexible panel as the flexible panel is advanced through the apparatus from the inlet to the outlet.

13. (Withdrawn) The hand-held apparatus according to Claim 12 wherein the first portion of the bottom wall that defines the first elongated passageway comprises an elongated channel formed therein.

14. (Withdrawn) The hand-held apparatus according to Claim 12 further comprising a handle attached to the elongated bottom wall.

15. (Withdrawn) The hand-held apparatus according to Claim 12 wherein the article is an electrical conductor.

16. (Withdrawn) The hand-held apparatus according to Claim 12 wherein the cover further comprises a wall having a free end extending from the flexible panel first surface adjacent the first edge portion, and wherein the top wall upper surface is configured to slidably receive the flexible cover wall thereon as the flexible panel is advanced through the apparatus.